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MATTERS RELATING TO ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND FOR TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTIES

PROVISION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTIES OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Project for an information exchange system for country activities

Note by the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Executive Secretary

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1 - 3	2
II.	PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTED RESULTS	4 - 12	2 - 4
III.	PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND COSTING	13 - 16	3 - 4

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Following a request by the Committee at its sixth session, the interim secretariat prepared a note for the seventh session on an information exchange system related to climate change activities (A/AC.237/28, section I.A). The main objective of the system would be to facilitate and coordinate external support, on request, for activities related to the Convention in developing and other countries (especially with a view to implementing Article 12.7 of the Convention, but also in relation to Articles 8.2 (c) and 12.4, as well as to paragraphs 8 and 9 of General Assembly resolution 47/195). This information exchange system would be set up as a joint project between the interim secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

2. At its seventh session, the Committee welcomed a statement by the Executive Director of UNEP confirming the willingness of UNEP to collaborate in such a joint project under the auspices of the interim secretariat. It requested the Executive Secretary, in conjunction with UNEP, to proceed with the elaboration of the proposed joint project, taking account of the views expressed by delegations in the discussion of this item, and to seek extrabudgetary funding for the project, possibly through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It further requested the Executive Secretary to report on progress to the Committee at its eighth session.

3. As a follow up to this request, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Secretary have developed a joint proposal, as described below.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND EXPECTED RESULTS

4. The project name is "Country Activities on Climate Change: Information Exchange System" (CLIMEX).

5. The contents of the "CLIMEX" project will be essentially as described in paras. 5-8(a); 9-14; and 17-20 of document A/AC.237/28, which was presented to the seventh session of the Committee. In summary, the initial focus will be on exchanging information relating to country activities at the national level, for the purpose of facilitating and coordinating external support for such activities and sharing information about their results on a voluntary basis. On the "demand" side, this would include information on completed, ongoing and planned studies on national inventories of emissions by sources and removals by sinks, on impacts and adaptation measures, on mitigation measures, and on activities related to capacity building, research, systematic observation, education, training and public awareness. This information will show what gaps remain on the "demand" side, in the coverage of countries and subjects, that could be filled with external support. On the "supply" side, the information would include sources of technical expertise and financial resources, at both the multilateral and bilateral levels, which are available for providing support for national climate change activities, in particular to developing countries.

6. The "CLIMEX" project will be developed in a phased approach, covering a pilot phase of one year and a follow-up phase. In the pilot phase, which is intended to start in October 1993, activities will be initiated and experience built up. Furthermore, a proposal for the follow-up phase will be developed on the basis of an evaluation of the pilot phase, and will be presented for financing, possibly under the GEF. Reports on the progress of the project will be provided to the Committee and later to the Conference of the Parties (COP), as well as to the Governing Council of UNEP, as appropriate.

7. The joint project will build on and integrate existing activities in UNEP and the interim secretariat, notably the preparation by UNEP of the "Country Study Report", which is submitted regularly to IPCC. This UNEP report contains information about official national studies on climate change, including on inventories of greenhouse gas emissions and their removals by sinks, impact assessments, and emissions mitigation analyses (see document IPCC-IX/INF.2 "Country Study Report" of 22 June 1993). The results of the project will include enhancements of current work, notably:

(a) Improved information on country activities;

(b) Information on sources of support for national activities;

(c) Entry of information into a computerized data base;

(d) Improved access to information by users.

8. The pilot phase will seek to identify available information, establish where additional information needs to be developed, and start collecting and processing that information. This phase will also allow for the concrete formulation of the necessary capacities for collecting, processing and disseminating information. The system will be designed to allow easy access, but due importance will be given to any need to protect confidential information.

9. The "CLIMEX" project will actively seek information on completed, ongoing and planned activities related to climate change, on requests by developing and other countries to undertake such activities, and on resources available from countries and organizations. The questionnaire now used by UNEP will be revised and expanded to take into account the information needs of this project. Additional information sought on the "demand" side will include specification of the requested assistance, and on the "supply" side it will include information concerning the related interests of suppliers of resources, the types of projects/programmes they are funding or would be interested in funding, the quantity of financial resources available, and information on possible conditions for these resources.

10. During the pilot phase, the information exchange function will be carried out through conventional channels of communication, such as printed media, telephone and telefax as well as through contacts at sessions of the Committee. Plans are under way to use more advanced information systems. These will include the distribution of information on diskettes, as well as over existing and planned computer networks, such as the electronic bulletin board that is now being developed by the UNEP Climate Unit. This upgrading will depend on the extent to which resources are available. The project will have to be undertaken in close cooperation with capacity-building and training activities of other organizations in this area, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and others, to ensure that governments, especially in the developing countries, will be able to make use of this information.

11. During the pilot phase, the information exchange system will be used by UNEP and the interim secretariat to encourage contacts between potential suppliers and users of technical and financial resources. In addition, Governments will be able to make direct contacts using the distributed information in order to match their needs with resources from elsewhere, without necessarily passing through the project, while keeping CLIMEX informed.

12. Contacts with other relevant information systems and institutions will be developed which could be of assistance in providing the requested information, such as activities undertaken by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) related to technology inventories; the greenhouse gas technology information exchange "GREENTIE" of the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as well as other relevant information that may be available in organizations such as the GEF, UNDP, World Bank and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

III. PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND COSTING

13. The project will be based in Geneva, and executed under the joint oversight of UNEP and the interim secretariat. The project manager will be selected by joint decision of UNEP and the interim secretariat.

14. In order to exchange information effectively, the capacity must exist to collect, process, store, and disseminate information efficiently. The interim secretariat has been able to acquire some of the basic hardware and software, as well as technical expertise, thus providing this project with an infrastructure on which to build (see para. 36 of A/AC.237/40). It is assumed that the necessary computer hardware infrastructure will continue to be made available by the interim secretariat.

15. A tentative project budget for the pilot phase (October 1993 - September 1994) is as follows:

	US dollars
Project manager	190'000.--[1/]
Junior professional officer	80'000.--[1/]
General service assistant	55'000.--[1/]
Travel	30'000.--
Computer equipment and hardware	25'000.--
Communications, printing and reporting	30'000.--
TOTAL:	410'000.--[2/]

16. The Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Secretary are consulting on ways of refining these estimates and securing the necessary funding. UNEP is ready to share the costs of the project manager. As far as the interim secretariat is concerned, the main option is to draw on the trust fund for the negotiating process. Bilateral finance for the junior professional post may be a further option.

Notes

1/ These figures include not only the salary but also an estimate of common staff costs.

2/ Additional provision for overheads may need to be made depending on the source of funding.